

What is claimed is:

1. An electronic commerce goods ordering method comprising:
specifying broad conditions for ordering a desired commodity by a consumer;
searching a database for commodities having definite specifications meeting the broad conditions specified by the consumer;
prioritizing the commodities found by said searching based on a distributor's sales strategy; and
displaying to the consumer a subset of the commodities found above a predetermined distributor set priority level.

2. The electronic commerce goods ordering method according to Claim 1, wherein: the consumer, when ordering, is prompted to specify a category of a plurality of categories, said plurality comprising a "complete product," a "set of components," or "discrete components."

3. The electronic commerce goods ordering method according to Claim 1, wherein, the consumer, when ordering, is prompted to specify a type of food.

4. The electronic commerce goods ordering method according to Claim 1, wherein, the consumer, when ordering, is prompted to specify a restriction on diet.

5. The electronic commerce goods ordering method according to Claim 1, wherein, the consumer, when ordering, is prompted to specify a price constraint, said price constraint including low, medium, or high.

6. A method for displaying a limited list of goods to a consumer by a distributor over network, said method comprising:

- receiving a customer requirement for goods;
- retrieving from a database a prioritized list of goods meeting said customer requirement;
- forming a reduced list from said prioritized list of goods based on a predetermined restriction; and
- displaying high priority items from said reduced list to said customer.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said predetermined restriction is selected from a group consisting of recency of order placement or seasonal basis of a good of said prioritized list of goods.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein said prioritized list of goods comprises goods having promotion points, each good of said prioritized list of goods having zero or more promotion points.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said promotion points comprise points for excessive stock and sales campaign points.

10. A system for a consumer to view different levels in a distributor's hierarchical list of goods, said system comprising:

a plurality of component dependency trees for goods maintained by a distributor, wherein a component of a tree of said plurality of component dependency trees has one or more sub-components;

a rating scheme for assigning promotion points to said one or more sub-components, wherein a component rating is a sum of said component's sub-components promotion points;

an user input for selecting a level of said component dependency trees, that said user wants displayed; and

a distributor ordering mechanism based on said promotion points, such that only a portion of goods available at said level is displayed to said user.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein said distributor ordering mechanism selects goods for display to said consumer with promotion points above a predetermined level.

12. The system of claim 10 wherein said distributor ordering mechanism displays goods available at said level according to a predetermine order until a predetermined number to be displayed is reached.

13. A plurality of tables stored in a computer readable medium for storing promotion points related to an item offered by a distributor to a customer via a communications network, said plurality of tables comprising:

a first table having a plurality of first level items , each first level item of said plurality of first level items having a corresponding summation promotion value; and
 a second table having a second level of a plurality of second level items, wherein a first level item of said plurality of first level items has at least one second level item and wherein said first level item's corresponding summation promotion value includes said at least one second level item corresponding addition promotion value.

14. The plurality of tables of claim 13 further comprising
 a third table having a third level of a plurality of third level items, wherein a second level item of said plurality of second level items has at least one third level item and wherein said second level item's corresponding addition promotion value includes said at least third level item corresponding sub-addition promotion value.

15. The plurality of tables of claim 13 wherein said promotion values at each level are used by said distributor in determining a menu of items displayed to said customer, when said customer places an order related to said items.

16. A database system comprising a plurality of items that may be ordered by a customer computer at a user selected level of a plurality of levels, and for use in returning an order menu to said customer computer, said database system comprising:
 a plurality of component tables for showing the relationship between a first item of said plurality of items at a first level of a plurality of levels and one or more second items of said plurality of items at a second level of said plurality of levels, wherein said first item comprises said one or more second items;
 a promotion table for each level indicating the promotion points assigned to each item, wherein said first item has promotion points including an addition of promotion points of said one or more second items; and
 a menu table for returning to said customer computer a list of offered items at said user selected level, wherein said list of offered items is based on said promotion table for said user selected level.

17. A computer program product stored in a computer readable medium for displaying a limited list of goods to a consumer by a distributor over a network, said computer program product comprising:
 code for receiving a customer requirement for goods;

- 5 code for retrieving from a database a prioritized list of goods meeting said
6 customer requirement; and
7 code for forming a reduced list from said prioritized list of goods based on
8 a predetermined restriction.

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